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federacy, as obvious as they are likely to be exciting ; and the bearings of the measure upon our relations to foreign powers, may prove to be of the most complicated character.

If we are to discuss matters of the import last intimated, it must be at some future time. The publications, of which we have given the titles above, throw but little light on the political events of the day. Mrs. Holley has given an agreeable account of her visit, in her own femininely graceful style, yet by no means destitute of expression and force ; and her statements, as to the natural features of the country, are, in substance, correct. In support of the statements made by us, in reference to the land speculations, we refer to the first-named production, written by a sufferer ; and we have other proofs, that his statements, so far as they go, are true. We wish there was less, in the authentic story of the transactions we have had in view, of a nature to damp the ardor we should feel in the cause of free principles, struggling against antiquated bigotry and the grasping ambition of a ferocious soldier.

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ART. XI. — *Didactics, Social, Literary, and Political*. By ROBERT WALSH. In two volumes. 12mo. pp. 258 and 268. Philadelphia ; Carey, Lea, and Blanchard. 1836.

WITH matter already in type to follow this, we have exceeded our limits, and yet we cannot refrain from expressing, in a few words, the satisfaction which has been afforded us by these volumes. They belong to a class of publications, of which we may hope hereafter to see frequent specimens. Many of our countrymen, the most capable of profiting the present times and the future, by the fruit of their minds, pass their lives amidst engagements, forbidding them to think of any long, connected work. The few who can be authors by profession, do not enshrine all their brilliancies in forms of elaborate treatise ; but often are prompted to their expression by the occasion or the humor of the hour. It is well that both should from time to time look back, and select, from what they have been producing for the public use, whatever seems most worthy of preservation. That the volume so formed will

be a Miscellany, makes no objection. Miscellanies are excellent compositions in their place ; and there are more of us than are always willing to avow it, who like to take up a book, which will soon and easily release our attention. The fashion has lately been set among us, in the highest quarters. The "Miscellanies" of Dr. Channing have been the principal means of extending the fame of that distinguished writer. To the similar volumes by Mr. Webster, posterity will appeal in justifying the reputation of the illustrious New England statesman and jurist. And lately, in the midst of his immense labors, in contributions to legal science, Mr. Justice Story has found time to arrange a collection of writings on a variety of subjects, and in a variety of forms, which show the large range of his pursuits, and the success of his devotion to the less severe Muses. Mr. Walsh is one of those, from whom the American reading public is prepared most gratefully to welcome such a gift.

Mr. Walsh has, from early manhood, been prominently before the public view. His writings, sent out from Baltimore, about the time of the revival of learning in this quarter (under the auspices of Mr. Buckminster and his friends), suddenly attracted an attention and a favor, such as few American writers have ever enjoyed. His "Letter on the Genius and Dispositions of the French Government," was published in 1810, previously to which time he is understood to have been a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. Rarely has any American work created such a *sensation*, if that be the word. The affluence of the writer's information respecting cotemporaneous events, and their analogies in other times ; the forcible, clear, and sparkling current of his style ; the manliness of his political philosophy ; the bold, and, at the same time, sagacious and sober grasp of his views into the future ; and the extraordinary copiousness and felicity of his allusions, — showing an extent of reading, very uncommon in those times, and far from common in any, — directly won for him a consideration of the most flattering kind. He was lifted at once, in our hitherto rather lonely Pantheon of letters, to a niche of the *Dii Majorum Gentium*.

To none of our readers can we be conveying information, when we say that Mr. Walsh's more recent writings have been numerous, and have not failed to fulfil the early omens of his fame. In 1811 he instituted the "American Review and

Repository." In 1813 he published his "Correspondence respecting Russia," with General Harper, and his "Essay on the Future State of Europe." In 1817, he undertook the management of the "American Register," a work, of course, of great labor, of which far the greater part fell to the editor's share. We have just now been looking over the volumes, with new surprise at the amount of intellectual resource which they display. In 1819, appeared his "Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain respecting the United States of America;" a production of which we fully expressed our sense, at the time, in the tenth volume of this Journal. He became editor, in 1821, of the Philadelphia "National Gazette"; in 1822, of the "American Magazine of Foreign Literature and Science"; and, in 1827, (having resigned the charge of the last-named periodical,) of the "American Quarterly Review." It is with great regret, that we have lately seen it announced, that he is compelled, by enfeebled health, to intermit his editorial labors. That it should be so, can surprise no one. That any mind should have elasticity enough, to bear, alone, the perpetual pressure of a daily Gazette, to say nothing of a Quarterly Journal for its rider, is, to us, a standing marvel. That it should not only sustain the weight, but preserve its vigor and vivacity in full play, such as the columns of these works exhibit, is a thing which cannot be "without our special wonder." But Mr. Walsh, all this done, has found time, faculty, and spirits to do much more, as various important publications testify. We say enough, in specifying the mass of most valuable contributions to American Biography, scattered through the thirteen volumes of the "Encyclopedia Americana," single compositions of the same class for Delaplaine's "Repository," and the continuation of the American edition of the British Poets, commenced by Mr. Sanford.

Of the contents and arrangement of the present publication, and others like, with which he proposes to follow it up, Mr. Walsh says, in his advertisement,

"The materials, which have been collected for the whole series of *Didactics*, date since 1810 to the present time, and are scattered over a quantity of inedited manuscript, a multitude of articles written for reviews, several pamphlets, and the files of a daily newspaper for fifteen years. The juxtaposition, under one general head, which has been made in various instances in the

present volumes, of paragraphs relating to that head, that were before altogether separate, must give additional force and some degree of novelty to the whole. The coherence is sufficient, and the occasional repetition of topics, presented however under different aspects, favorable for my chief purpose.

"To be made to think and learn without refreshment for the story appetite, is too great a hardship for some people. Therefore, and in order to relieve the austerity of so many solemn homilies as these volumes may be thought to contain, I have deemed it well to insert some narratives, and theatrical criticisms, — contributions from me to public journals at different times, — and illustrative cases, such as those of Caroline of England, Fauntleroy, and others." — p. viii.

The collections under the several titles are, for the most part, quite short, not often exceeding a dozen pages, and frequently only occupying one or two. Some of the weightiest, and of the lightest, subjects are treated; the former in the spirit of a comprehensive and grave, but benignant philosophy, the latter often with singular gracefulness and wit. A work so put together of course defies analysis. Enough for critic and for reader, that it is full of bright and solid sayings on a large variety of important and curious things, and that whoever keeps it by him will be at no loss for something to think of and enjoy. The sagacity of remarks, which page after page exhibits, on life and on morals, the greater and the less, is worthy of all praise; and the copiousness and felicity of quotation are of a quite rare excellence. But what is matter of yet higher commendation, is the firm, discriminating, and elevated moral tone which pervades the series of discussions. The specimens of this first excellence of writing, which occur in the articles entitled "Moral Courage," "Slander," "Breach of Confidence," and "Sensibility Awry," are but just samples of the rest; and, coming especially from such a source, the sound views, which in different connexions are exhibited, of the moral obligations of the periodical press, are entitled to, as we hope they will not fail to command, the most attentive consideration. Upon this theme, of exceeding moment in our country, and growing more momentous every day, we should enlarge, if we had the space, with some views suggested by Mr. Walsh's pregnant hints. We wish we could think, that the delay of what we might have to submit, will make it at all unseasonable.

We had marked some passages in these volumes for extracting ; but even this omission we find ourselves compelled to make. We are bound to own, that, in not a few instances, a greater simplicity of style would have pleased us better. We will not complain of an occasional complicated structure of sentences. It is, perhaps, a natural incident enough to the variety and fulness of the author's thoughts. At all events, something of mannerism in composition is to be indulged to men of a marked character of mind. Who shall tell, how much the form of a thought has to do with its conception, and accordingly how far a man, who thinks for himself, is bound to adopt the shapes of expression, which other thinkers have preferred? Or, this told, who can say further, how much of animation in writing may be lost, if a fervid thinker is to be compelled, in writing, to do constant violence to impulses which urge on him some peculiarity of language? But we fear that there are clearer deviations, on Mr. Walsh's part, from a perfect taste, in the occasional use of unauthorized words, and even, in some instances, of a word, of which one can hardly say, like the civil French arbiter of such a question, "S'il n'est pas *Anglais*, il mérite bien de l'être." We had marked some such cases ; but it would not be just dealing to bring them together, out of the connexions, to which they might severally appeal for justification. For ourselves, we are free to confess, that we would fain have them discarded, even at some sacrifice of conciseness and point.

Mr. Walsh says, in his Advertisement ;

"In case this, the first selection, should win that degree of favor which the publishers anticipate, it may be followed by others of greater variety and scope in the topics, and possibly more worthy of attention and success, by general interest and value. But a small share, comparatively, of the Literary and Political Didactics has been used on the present occasion. They are reserved for a future opportunity." — p. ix.

For our own and the common benefit, we heartily wish him confirmed health to prosecute the undertaking, and to his publishers that patronage to the present experiment, which a community, wisely regardful of its own interests, will not fail to afford.

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